

NEW JERSEY.

PETITION

OF THE

MANUFACTURERS OF PATERSON,

IN THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY.

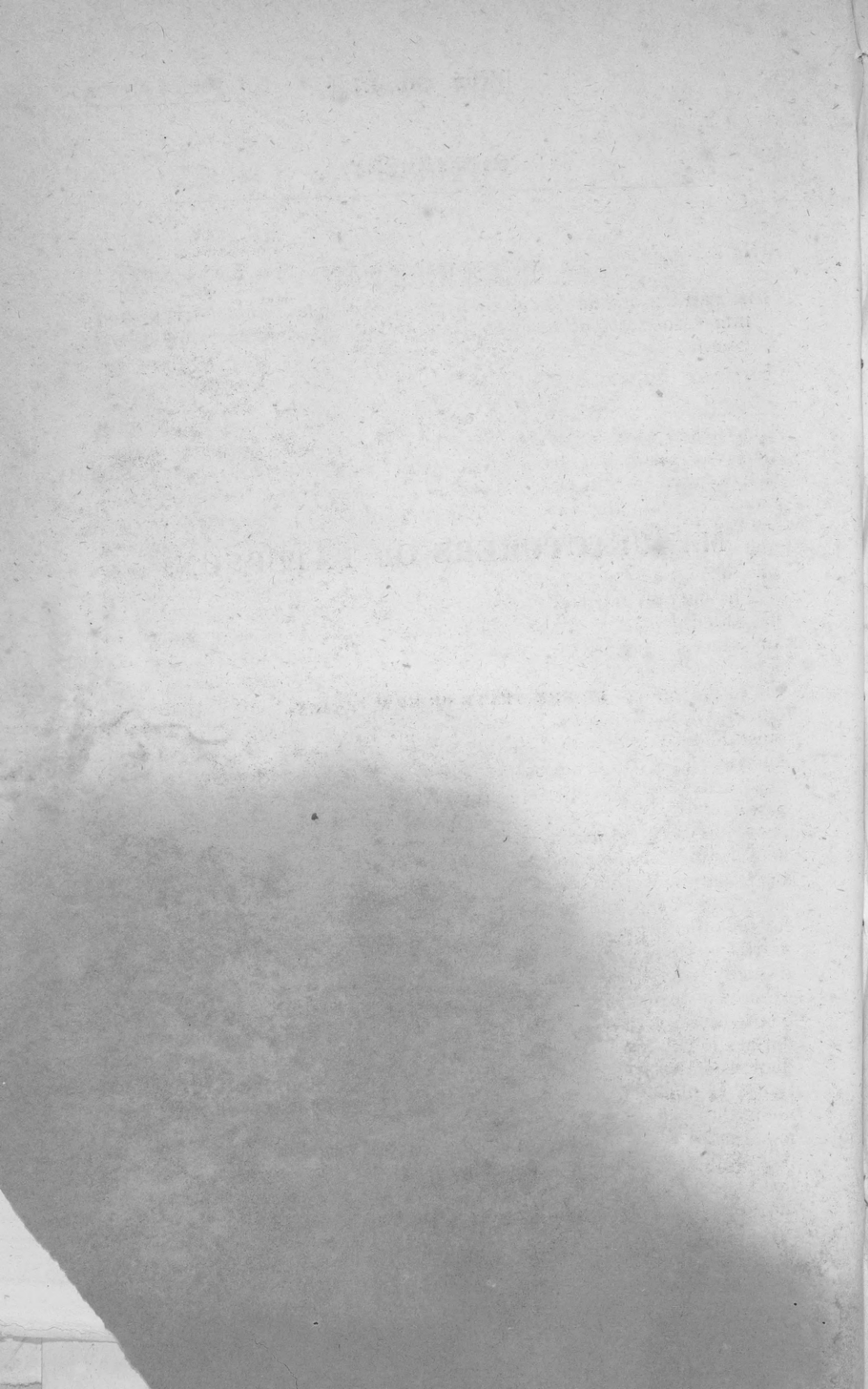
DECEMBER 31, 1827.

Referred to the Committee on Manufactures.

WASHINGTON :

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1828.



PETITION.

To the Honorable the House of Representatives of the United States :

The Petition of the Manufacturers of Paterson, New Jersey, and more especially of those engaged in the manufacture of flax and hemp,

HUMBLY SHEWETH :

That your petitioners have, on many other occasions, respectfully approached your honorable body on the subject of additional protection to the manufacturers of hemp and flax ; but their appeals, hitherto, have been in vain. On one occasion, when at least they had hoped for some amelioration of their condition, by the law regulating the tariff in 1824, they were not only disappointed, but left to deplore that any attempt had been made to solicit your favorable consideration of their interests.

The duty on imported canvass, and other coarse fabrics, was specific, antecedent to the passage of that law. It was therein changed to ad valorem, and, by this modification, your petitioners lost nearly thirty per cent. of that protection which had existed for years before the establishment of a manufactory in these United States. The specific duty on all canvass amounted to \$2 and \$2 50 per bolt, then almost the only article manufactured in the country. The ad valorem duty of 15 per cent. on heavy duck, costing as it does about 70 roubles in Russia, amounts to a little more than \$1 80, and on light or ravens duck, valued at 20 roubles, the duty will amount to about 60 cents per bolt. Thus it will be remarked, that, whilst every other manufacture of the country received the aid of your fostering hand, the situation of your petitioners became much worse, and the consequence has been, that the proprietors of many of these establishments for manufacturing flax, have not only been compelled to stop their works, but the machinery is offered in the market at a very great, and, in many instances, unheard of sacrifice. Such is the present condition of most of them. And that the loss may be partially estimated, we beg to assure your honorable body that not less than half a million of dollars is now expended, and must be irrecoverably lost under this depression, without the interference of your salutary aid and protection. If manufactories have any claims on account of the employment they afford to laboring population, we may safely say, that much more is required in the manufacture of flax, than in the production of cloth from any other material ; arising out of the greater number and variety of processes, together with the imperfection of the machinery employed to supply the place of manual labor.

Another serious difficulty under which your petitioners are now suffering, in addition to the want of adequate protection, is, that the

revenue laws are more frequently violated in the exportation of canvass, than in that of any other article. It has been stated, and, it is believed, with truth, that canvass is taken on board of vessels bound on foreign voyages, for the benefit of drawback, and made up on board into sails; the debenture is, notwithstanding, recovered at the customhouse, and the requisite documents presented to cancel the bonds. Your petitioners do not intend to cast obloquy on the officers of the customs; *they* see that the requirements of the law are complied with; the evil lies in the facility with which certificates of landing are procured abroad. How many there are who take advantage of this imperfection of our laws, your petitioners cannot pretend to say; but it is not unfrequently practised, and, thus, much revenue is lost to the nation.

One other practice occurs, which, by the laws of other Governments, is provided against. Our vessels often proceed on their voyages with old sails, with the express intention of procuring new ones at those ports where canvass may be purchased somewhat cheaper; and it has happened that new vessels have gone to Europe with the old sails of other vessels, for the same purpose of obtaining an entire new suit on their arrival. Your honorable body will call to mind that this may happen also with cordage and light chains; it actually did occur so frequently with chain cables, that it became necessary so to modify the law relating to this article, as to prevent these various frauds.

Thus it is that we labor under more impediments to advancement than any other domestic manufacturers, in not having the protection of the Government, nor the friendly disposition of the consumer; besides that, we have to contend against the violation of the revenue laws, the prejudice always arising on the introduction of a new article for consumption, the experience and capital of the foreign manufacturer, and the encouragement of foreign Governments to the industry of their own country.

Under all these difficulties, we humbly pray that your honorable body will take into consideration the peculiar hardship of our case, and extend to us that protection which others have received at your hands. If no other can obtain, the demands of common justice seem to require, that, at least, we should be placed in the situation we were previously to the passage of the law, in 1824, regulating the tariff. But we would most respectfully suggest, that such an alteration should take place as would enable us successfully to pursue our occupations without fear from the overwhelming influence of the foreign manufacturer; and the following duties would tend to accomplish that desirable end:

On the importation of heavy duck, manufactured				
from hemp or flax,	-	-	-	10 cts. per sq. yd.
On light or ravens duck, from do.	-	-	-	11 do
Osnaburghs,	-	-	-	8 do
Ticklenburghs,	-	-	-	8 do
Burlaps,	-	-	-	8 do
Twine, and flax or hemp yarns,	-	-	-	6 cts. per lb.

This protection and limiting the debenture to be obtained on not less than one hundred bolts of duck to be exported, would secure to us the home market now, the markets of South America hereafter, and turn the attention of the agriculturists of the country to a new channel, from whence there would arise incalculable benefits.

The finer qualities of flaxen and hempen goods have not as yet been attempted in our country ; the manufacturers have devoted their attention almost exclusively to the coarser descriptions, the principal of which has been canvass, as being more of it consumed, and most likely, for a great variety of reasons, to be encouraged by the People and Government. The number of factories, the quantity and value of the goods which might be manufactured, together with the number of acres of land which would probably be brought into cultivation, may be ascertained by a reference to the Report of the Committee appointed in the Convention at Harrisburg, on the subject of flax and hemp manufactures, hereunto attached. Of all the establishments therein mentioned, only two are in operation, and these entirely from the demand for canvass for the supply of the Navy of the United States, in which it has long been used, to the satisfaction of those experienced and highly competent judges, the Commissioners of the Navy, and the various officers commanding the vessels, who, notwithstanding the objections raised by others, pronounce it to be greatly superior to any foreign canvass ever used on board our national ships.

The present establishments could now manufacture 870,000 lbs. of flax, equal to 19,500 bolts of canvass per annum ; the cost of the former would be \$ 104,000 ; the sale of the latter would amount to \$ 273,000 ; which would yield to the industry of the country a gross sum of \$ 377,000 ; of which the farmer would have the exclusive benefit of one-third of this amount, whilst the laborer would receive \$ 169,000, and the country would be comparatively independent, with an article in quality every way superior.

The progress to the capability of manufacturing this quantity has been accomplished in the course of five or six years, and an immediate advantage might at once be derived from it. If then so much has been done in so short a time, without any protection, we have reason to conclude, from a proper encouragement to the manufacturer, that, in four years more, we should be fully able to supply the entire home demand, and, reasoning from what has been effected in cotton and other fabrics, this article would be afforded cheaper to the consumer at the expiration of that time, than he could possibly import a similar quality.

The quantity of canvass and other articles manufactured from hemp and flax, imported into the United States, on an average of years, may be found by a reference to the report made at Harrisburg, already mentioned, to which your petitioners solicit the attention of your honorable body.

Your petitioners have no doubt but that it was contemplated to extend a protection to the manufacturers of hemp and flax by the law of

1824, equally with the manufacturers of every other article : but to ascertain, with some degree of precision, the actual situation in which they were left by that tariff, it becomes necessary to revert to the report of the Honorable the Secretary of the Treasury, for the year ending the 30th September, 1826 ; it will there be found that of imported articles manufactured from hemp and flax, which are NOT subject to 25 per cent. ad valorem duty, the whole value amounted to the enormous sum of \$2,757,080 ; whilst those paying an ad valorem duty of 25 per cent. only amounted to \$229,946, not quite one tenth of the amount of goods paying less than 25 per cent. duty, and certainly not exceeding in value the operations of a factory of 2,000 spindles, employing 300 hands, for 12 months ; whilst those articles composing the great bulk of the consumption of the country have met with a reduction of protection, and are, in fact, the only description of goods we either pretend to, or can manufacture ; although it was unquestionably the intention of Congress, in 1824, to have granted further aid and protection.

As a measure of policy, almost every foreign nation has devised means to encourage the manufacture of canvass, and perhaps no other ever possessed the capability to manufacture it, which is exhibited all over the United States. England, to equal whose naval strength, at no distant period, we indulge the expectation, has done more, perhaps, than any other country in enacting such laws as would secure to her maritime interests complete independence. There, the importer has the option to pay either the specific duty of 7½d. the square yard, or 40 per cent. ad valorem, and “foreign made sails, on board any ship or vessel belonging to any of His Majesty’s subjects, whether, in use or not, for every one hundred pounds value, thirty pounds” duty. The coarser qualities of goods are rated in a similar proportion : for flaxen or hempen goods, not enumerated, woven twenty threads to the inch, and not exceeding twenty-four threads, pay a duty of 3½d. per square yard, to be reduced one-eighth of a half-penny for seven years, and, in 1834, the duty is fixed at 3d. per square yard ; there, goods woven twenty-four threads to the inch, and not exceeding thirty, the duty is 5d. to reduce one-eighth of one penny for seven years, and, in 1834, the duty is fixed at 4d. per square yard ; or linen goods may be imported at an ad valorem duty of forty per cent. at the choice of the importer. In addition to this, the customhouse and dock dues and expenses, are considerably more than is paid in any other country ; a circumstance which operates materially in favor of the manufacturer.

The duty on imported flax, dressed or undressed, to 1826, is 4d. per 112 lbs. to reduce one penny to 1828, and, after that, it pays one penny per 112 lbs. Thus it appears that the English manufacturer is protected in every possible manner, and directly over the American manufacturer, nearly 200 per cent. ; whilst foreign flax is there subject to a little less than half a mill per pound, and our farmer is protected to the extent of nearly 1½ cents per pound. Not that your petitioners mean to complain of this ; the principle is admitted by them to be correct ; they only desire a due proportion of those favors so liberally bestowed upon other members of the community.

Is it not a matter of deep interest to become independent in those articles of consumption without which our comforts are greatly lessened? Few there are who would not have consented to the sacrifice (if so it be) of that protection to coarse flax fabrics, which would have secured to them the necessities they were sorely experiencing the want of, whilst the nation was engaged in war. Let us call to mind the condition in which our Navy would be placed under such circumstances as occurred in our last conflict with Great Britain.

The whole naval force of the United States, as we have seen stated, at present consists of 12 ships of the line, 16 frigates, 13 sloops of war, and 6 schooners. The duck which would be required to fit out these vessels would amount to 28,987 bolts, of 40 yards each, according to the estimate of an experienced sail maker, viz :

12 Ships of the Line,	each 900 bolts,	- -	10,800 bolts.
16 Frigates,	each 400 bolts,	- -	6,400
15 Sloops of War,	each 346 bolts,	- -	5,190
6 Schooners,	each 170 bolts,	- -	1,020
Head and Top Cloths and Tarpaulins,	about	-	2,000
17,885 Hammocks,	71,540 yards,	- -	3,577

Making the aforesaid total of - - - 28,987 bolts, nearly one-half of the whole importation of heavy duck into the United States, in any one year. This being considered, and as high as one dollar per yard was paid for the sails of one of our frigates during the last war, it is of itself almost convincing as respects the policy of protecting manufactures of this article. In addition to the difficulty, indeed, almost impossibility, of procuring any, it would cost the nation to fit out these vessels for sails alone, in time of war, \$ 1,159,440 : whereas, where our home manufactures encouraged and protected, the expense of providing this auxiliary means of national defence, would not exceed \$ 350,000, under any circumstances. There would then be a saving to the country, at a time too when it would be most desirable, of about \$ 809,440. We, therefore, beg leave to urge this inquiry on the consideration of your honorable body, as manufacturers of an article indispensable equally to the commerce of the country, as for its defence and glory.

The importing merchants are convinced themselves of the unequal and unfavorable operation of ad valorem duties : for the manufacturer of other countries can always send forward his supplies at less invoice cost than the individual giving the order to the foreign manufacturer, and through a foreign merchant. It frequently happens that our merchants suffer losses, by the foreign manufacturer following on their orders for similar goods, with large shipments on his own account, on which various charges and commissions are saved : and these articles are sold at auction, to the entire discomfiture of all the plans and calculations of our importers.

There is a fraud under which the American manufacturer disadvantageously labors ; it is seriously deplored by all interested. And, if your petitioners suffer under any peculiar hardship, it is, that, when

an article, new in its composition or workmanship, is made acceptable in the market, samples are immediately sent by agents to other countries, where the goods are imitated, and the difference in capital, experience, machinery, and bounties allowed on exportation, enable them to inundate the country, to the utter extinction of the domestic article. This has been done this year; and is to occur, during the next, with the manufacturers of hemp and flax. We have extracts from letters addressed by foreign manufacturers to their agents in this country, in which, to use their own expressions, they say "they are determined to put down the manufacturers of canvass," particularly during the year to come. Your petitioners, knowing the power their enemies have, are now dreading this event; nor can they be relieved from this anticipated annihilation, but through the interposition of your favorable influence and authority.

This is not a question of sectional or individual interest; the whole country must derive advantage from the protection and encouragement of the manufacturers of flax and hemp. The raw material may be grown in any part of the United States, and millions of acres of land would be brought into cultivation, if a demand could be created. It is, however, your petitioners believe, only to be accomplished by securing to ourselves the home market, which views are confirmed in the history of every other raw material used for manufacturing purposes; and, after this effect is once produced, we may look forward to the supply of many other countries where manufactories may be established; thousands of working hands will be excited to healthful employment and new efforts, which must eventuate in their particular independence and good, and the general welfare and independence of the country. In England, where the Corn Laws are so absorbing in their influence, flax stands, in the reports of their Board of Agriculture, as the next valuable crop to wheat, although without protection. Why is it, then, (fostered as it is by us,) that we are not to become the exporters as well as manufacturers of this material? The reason to your petitioners, is obvious: there is no immediate, direct demand to cause an excitement of those energies among that class of people, who, in our country, are characteristically as enterprising as any other citizens, and more so than the farmers of any other country.

Left, as we are, without any the least aid from your honorable body, even in a more deplorable situation than we were antecedent to the passage of the law, in 1824, regulating the customs, threatened with annihilation by the foreign manufacturer, and promising such beneficial results as our industry and ingenuity does to the country, we humbly and earnestly implore your honorable body, that you may be pleased, in your wisdom and justice, to grant us that protection, which, as it appears to your petitioners, is absolutely necessary to sustain, not only the manufacturers of hemp and flax, but the best interests of the country.

And, as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

PATERSON, N. J. December 22, 1827.

The above petition was adopted at a meeting of the township of Acquahanone, and recommended for the signatures of the people.

WARREN HAIGHT, *Chairman.*

JOSEPH SMITH, *Secretary.*

Extract from the proceedings of the General Convention at Harrisburg.

"It appears from the Treasury report of 1827, that, in the year ending the 30th September, 1826, the amount of imported articles manufactured out of flax, not subject to 25 per cent. duty, was \$2,757,080

All other, paying duty of 25 per cent.	-	-	229,946
Manufactures of hemp,	-	-	1,738,846
All other, except cordage	-	-	48,909

\$4,774,781

Of cotton bagging, there was imported 2,204,822 yards, valued at - - - - - 274,973

Of cordage, twine, pack thread, and seine twine, there was imported, in the same year, 1,949,915 pounds, of which 325,641 pounds was twine, pack thread, and seine twine, valued at \$62,827, - - - 147,426

Of hemp manufactured, there was imported, in the same period, 88,116 cwt. - - - - - 551,757

And of flax imported no return can be found, but, from a pretty correct source, it is estimated at 600,000 pounds, valued at - - - - - 72,000

Total value of bagging, cordage, twine, &c. - \$1,046,156

The committee cannot state the precise quantity and value of each article imported last year, but, from the Treasury report referred to, it appears that the cost of sail cloth imported, was 856,474 dollars, and, estimating the bolt of said cloth at the average cost in Russia, of 15 dollars per bolt, it would give 57,100 bolts as the importations of that year, of that single article; which would require 1,884,000 pounds of hemp or flax, for the manufacture of it, valued at 226,000 dollars.

Take for data the following schedule of the imports from Russia, only, in the year 1822, viz: 40,554 bolts heavy sail cloth, the average quantity of flax or hemp required to make it, would be,

	pounds	1,621,760
45,767 bolts ravens duck,	-	915,340
37,194 pieces sheeting	-	723,880
151,620 archines broad diaper	-	575,810
3,983 do. narrow	-	2,000
20,247 do. broad linen	-	20,120

92,082	archines narrow linen	-	-	-	21,000
20,981	do. drilling	-	-	-	24,000
492,824	do. crash	-	-	-	280,000
5,864	do. huckabuck	-	-	-	2,900

Total amount of pounds required of hemp and flax, 4,186,810

Which would cost \$ 523,350, and bring into cultivation at least 13,800 acres of land for its growth.

From the increased importation of sail cloth, since 1822, which is 8 per cent. it would, taking the foregoing estimate, made on the importation from Russia, in 1822, as data, require at least 4,521,700 pounds of flax, valued at 542,600 dollars, and the use of 15,000 acres of land, for the growth of the raw material, for the manufacture of those articles from Russia alone. For the manufacture of cotton bagging that was imported in 1826, it would require at least 3,300,000 pounds, or 1,473 tons of hemp; valued at the same rate as in the Treasury report, viz: 125 dollars per ton, would give an amount of 184,125 dollars, and would require the cultivation of 8,000 acres of land to produce it.

From the foregoing items, the following estimate is made of the quantity and value of the raw material requisite for the manufacture of the hempen and flaxen fabrics, imported into the United States last year, together with the quantity and value of hemp and flax, in the raw state, imported in the same period, viz: for sail cloth, raven duck, and other coarse articles, imported from Russia alone, it would require, of flax and hemp,					
			4,521,700 lbs.	valued at \$ 542,600	
For cotton bagging, requiring					
hemp,	-	-	3,300,000 lbs.	"	184,000
For cordage, twine, &c. hemp					
and flax,	-	-	1,949,915 lbs.	"	147,426
Of hemp, in its raw state, was					
imported	-	-	9,869,000 lbs.	"	551,757
Of flax, estimated at	-	-	620,000 lbs.	"	72,000
Hemp and flax,			<u>20,239,915 lbs.</u>	<u>\$ 1,497,783</u>	

Requiring the cultivation of nearly 50,000 acres of land for the growth of the raw material, giving employment directly to 7,000 hands to manufacture it, and indirectly to very many more.

In the foregoing estimate, the quantity and value of the raw material is not included, which is requisite for the manufacture of various articles of hemp and flax, included in the Treasury report. Of the amount of the value of the imported articles manufactured from these materials, the committee have confined themselves in bringing to the notice of this convention, to nothing but the most prominent articles of the coarser fabrics, and such as can be readily manufactured, and the raw material grown in our own country. But, though the coarse article is principally alluded to in this report, yet, the finer articles of linen man-

manufacture, of sheetings, of shirtings, sewing and shoe thread, and all the articles of finer fabrics of hemp and flax, would be materially promoted, and the manufacture of them encouraged by a judicious protection.

Of the ability of the manufacturers of this country to meet all demands for the manufactured articles of hemp and flax, not only for our own consumption, but also for exportation, there can be no doubt in the mind of any person of common observation, when he looks to what has been done in the manufacture of cotton, iron, nails, glassware, and many other articles.

There are in the United States seven establishments, containing 2,620 spindles for spinning flax, which, if fully employed in the manufacture of sail cloth, could make 19,500 bolts of duck, annually, requiring 870,000 pounds of flax, (for it is of flax that it is made in this country) the cost of which would be 104,000 dollars, and, when made into canvass, would sell for \$273,000, yielding to the industry of the country 169,000 dollars, and giving employment to 650 hands, exclusive of those employed in the agricultural branch.

If, within the period of five or six years, we are enabled to make more than half the sail cloth which is consumed in the United States, surely no fears need obtain that the demand for both the Americas cannot be supplied by our own manufacturers; provided that protection, which is absolutely necessary for the preservation of the existing establishments, and the encouragement for the establishing of new ones, is afforded.

To show the necessity of further protection to this branch of national industry, or, rather, more properly speaking, what ought to constitute a branch of it, it is remarked, that sail cloth, or duck, is only subject to a duty of 15 per cent. ad valorem, the same duty as is imposed on the raw material, flax. Previous to the revision of the tariff, in 1824, the duty on a bolt of duck, with customhouse charges, amounted to \$2 12½ per bolt; in the bill imposing a new rate of duty, as sent from the House of Representatives to the Senate, a duty of 25 per cent. ad valorem was imposed on all goods manufactured from hemp or flax. The Senate, however, disagreed to this item of the tariff, and so far as related to cotton bagging and sail cloth, a compromise took place, the duty on cotton bagging was fixed at 3½ cents per square yard, and a duty of 15 per cent. ad valorem imposed on sail cloth, which, with customhouse charges, will only amount to \$1 87½ per bolt, even on the best kinds of Russia duck; thus placing the manufacturer in a worse situation than he was in previous to the revision of the tariff, by a reduction of at least 25 cents per bolt.

Small as this protection is, still the manufacturer is in a measure deprived of a portion of it by the evasion of the laws relating to drawback, as sail cloth is sometimes shipped in vessels bound on long voyages, entered for the benefit of drawback, and a landing certificate procured; but the canvass is made up on board the ship by which it was exported, and the duty on the importation is returned to

the shipper, under the idea that the article was landed, and left behind in some foreign port.

In England, the manufacture of canvass is directly protected, inasmuch as every English ship, whether naval or commercial, is clothed with British manufactured sail cloth; and if a merchant vessel should, during her voyage, be compelled to use any foreign sail cloth to replace sails worn out or destroyed, the captain is obliged, on his return to an English port, to enter all sail cloth so used, and pay the regular import duty on it, even though the duck may have been in use eighteen months, and worth little or nothing. This protection is secured under heavy penalties, and gives to the English manufacturer the opportunity of not only supplying the canvass necessary to navigate the ship, but also what may be necessary to meet the wear during the voyage. But our ships, as it is well known, frequently leave our ports with barely a sufficient stock of sails to carry them across the Atlantic, and, when arrived out, they are supplied with foreign duck; thus depriving the manufacturer of the supply.

Should the old cry of monopoly be raised by the objectors to any further revision of the tariff, and the charge of fostering and pampering overgrown establishments and their proprietors be reiterated, the answer is ready; they are referred to the effect of competition in the manufacture of coarse cottons, window glass, nails, and other articles, which are now furnished to the consumers at lower prices than when they were imported from England under the old tariff. An adequate protection, and one which would not prove injurious to the revenue, would at once give life and activity to the several establishments which are now either wholly suspended, or are only enabled to sustain a precarious existence by the limited orders for the supply of the United States' Navy: only two establishments being now engaged in the manufacture of sail cloth. Give employment even to the existing manufactories, and it would encourage the growth of hemp and flax to a very large extent. Nothing but a steady, certain demand, is wanting for the raw material—such a demand as should not be affected and rendered abortive by overwhelming shipments from Europe of the manufactured article—to induce the agriculturist to produce an adequate supply for all the wants of the country; and thus, in a measure, afford some relief to the excess of the wheat, rye, corn, and tobacco crops, by bringing into cultivation a long neglected product of our soil.

The policy of protecting the manufacturers of sail cloth and other articles of vital importance, will be confessed by all those who have the true interests of their country at heart, and who recollect the exorbitant prices paid for sail cloth, and other indispensable articles, at the commencement of, and during the last war, when duck sold for 40 to 54 dollars per bolt; an article indispensable to the commerce of the country, as, also, for its defence and glory."